



PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Judy Dixon, Chairperson
Braille Authority of North America
PHONE: 1-202-707-0722
E-MAIL: jdix@loc.gov

BANA Holds Meeting, Elects New Officers

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) met October 20-22, 2006, in Washington DC. The meeting was hosted by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress, a member organization of BANA.

Members reviewed reports from the numerous BANA technical committees, including the Literary Committee, which is currently working on a new edition of *English Braille, American Edition*; the Tactile Graphics Committee finalizing guidelines for the production of tactile graphics; and the Braille Formats Committee, which is working on a revised edition of *Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription*. These three projects are all very large projects that the expert committees have been working on for several years. BANA also established a committee to develop transcription guidelines for the production of craft and hobby materials such as knitting and crochet patterns, chess materials, latch hook rug instructions, and other types of instructional items where no specific code exists to guide transcribers. This committee will be chaired by Marcy Ponzio of the Braille Institute of America. Kim Charlson, who has served as chair of BANA for the past three years will conclude her term of office at the end of 2006, but will continue representing the American Council of the Blind on the BANA Board.

Newly elected officers are:

Judith (Judy) Dixon, Chairperson

Judith Dixon is the Consumer Relations Officer at the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress. She has written and spoken extensively in the area of braille; is the creator and manager for NLS's Web-Braille service; and has been a lifelong reader of braille and a tireless advocate for braille literacy.

Eileen Curran, Vice-Chairperson

Eileen Curran is Vice President for Education Services at National Braille Press, where she has worked since 1985. She served as the chair of BANA from 2000 to 2003, and is currently treasurer of the International Council on English Braille. Passionate about braille, Eileen has been an instructor of teachers of the blind at Boston College, and previously taught braille at Perkins School for the Blind and in public school classes. Ms. Curran is the author of a braille primer for parents entitled *Just Enough to Know Better*, now in its tenth edition.

Jennifer Dunnam, Secretary

Jennifer Dunnam (Minneapolis, MN) is the Manager of Braille Programs for the National Federation of the Blind's Jernigan Institute, administering the courses for persons seeking certification in braille transcribing and proofreading from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Previously, she was the Manager of Access Programs in Disability Services at the University of Minnesota, overseeing braille production at the University. She is the author of *The Slate Book: A Guide to the Slate and Stylus* and serves on the board of the National Association to Promote the Use of Braille.

Mary Archer, Treasurer

Mary Archer is the Supervisor of the Braille Section at Minnesota State Services for the Blind, managing the braille production facility for the State of Minnesota. The Braille Section provides materials to students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. She is also the current president of the National Braille Association, Inc. In addition, she has previously served BANA as secretary and vice-chair. She is a certified literary and Nemeth Code braille transcriber.

The mission and purpose of the Braille Authority of North America are to assure literacy for tactile readers through the standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics. BANA promotes and facilitates the use, teaching and production of braille. It publishes rules, interprets and renders opinions pertaining to braille in all existing codes. It deals with codes now in existence or to be developed in the future, in collaboration with other countries using English braille. In exercising its function and authority, BANA considers the effects of its decisions on other existing braille codes and formats; the ease of production by various methods; and acceptability to readers.

Braille Authority of North America

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Representative

Kim Charlson
Frances Mary D'Andrea
Betsy Burnham
May Davis
Diane Wormsley
Bonnie Grimm
Sue Reilly
Darleen Bogart
Pam Boss
Eileen Curran
Judy Dixon
Mary Archer
Jennifer Dunnam
Maria Stevens

Organization

American Council of the Blind
American Foundation for the Blind
American Printing House for the Blind
Associated Services for the Blind
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired
Braille Institute of America
California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped
CNIB (The Canadian National Institute for the Blind)
The Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
National Braille Press
National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
National Braille Association
National Federation of the Blind
Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind, Associate Member

BANA Technical Committees

Ad Hoc Committee on Braille Research

Frances Mary D'Andrea, Co-chair
Diane Wormsley, Co-chair
Darleen Bogart
Eileen Curran
Judy Dixon
Cay Holbrook
Rob Wall-Emerson
Robin Wetzell

Ad Hoc Committee on Early Literacy

Materials Production

Betsy Burnham, Chairperson
Diane Wormsley, Board Liaison
Susan Christensen
Warren Figueiredo
Ann Kelt
Ann MacCuspie
Edie Mourre

Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Language

Materials

Ann Kelt, Chairperson
Eileen Curran, Board Liaison
Marilyn Breedlove
Jill Cooter
Lisa McClure

Braille Formats Technical Committee

Lynette Taylor, Chairperson
Kim Charlson, Board Liaison
Deborah Brown
Susan Christensen
Debbie Gillespie
Sandy Smith
Ann Kelt
Mary Czepyha, Consultant
Dena Garrett, Consultant

Computer Braille Technical Committee

Melissa Hirshson, Chairperson
May Davis, Board Liaison
John Jackson
Sandra Ruconich
Joseph Sullivan
Betty Teachman

Crafts and Hobbies Technical Committee

Marcy Ponzio, Chairperson
Eileen Curran, Board Liaison
Lorraine Banks
Gilbert Busch
Melissa Hirshson
Gail Snider
Yvette Pourciau, Consultant

Literary Braille Technical Committee

Martha Pamperin, Chairperson
Darleen Bogart, Board Liaison
Nancy Barker
Anna Lee Braunstein
Joseph Sullivan
John Wilkinson
Julia Moyer
Tom Keith, Consultant

Mathematics Braille Technical Committee

Dorothy Worthington, Chairperson
Mary Archer, Board Liaison
Helen McMillan
Allison O'Day
Susan Osterhaus
Jean Simpson
Joanne Baldwin, Consultant
Mary Denault, Consultant

Music Braille Technical Committee

Lawrence Smith, Chairperson
Jennifer Dunnam, Board Liaison
Karin Auckenthaler
Beverly McKenney
Harvey Miller
Tom Ridgeway
Karen Gearreald, Consultant

Publications Committee

Susan Christensen, Chairperson
Judy Dixon, Board Liaison
Bob Brasher
Warren Figueiredo
Sandy Smith
Joanna E. Venneri

Refreshable Braille Technical Committee

Caryn Navy, Chairperson
Judy Dixon, Board Liaison
Eric Guillory
Mary Beth Metzger
Sharon Monthei
Graham Stoodley

Tactile Graphics Technical Committee

Lucia Hasty, Chairperson
Jennifer Dunnam, Board Liaison
Constance Craig
John McConnell
Allison O'Day
Diane Spence
Susan Osterhaus, Consultant